THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

PICTURE PREFERENCES OF GRADE ONE CHILDREN

by

© SYLVIA ANN LEWCHUK

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled PICTURE PREFERENCES OF GRADE ONE CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the patterns of picture preferences of grade one children and their reasons for these preferences.

A six-item verbal questionnaire was designed and administered to a group of 30 grade one children. Eight isolated pictures from eight picture books, selected by a Consultant in Learning Resources and varying in theme and form, were used to elicit responses from the children.

The data for this study were collected by filling in a questionnaire according to the responses given by the children and on audio tape. After audio was transcribed the data were tabulated into a picture preference frequency chart and a reason frequency chart. Analysis of the data involved comparing and contrasting the frequency of responses for both picture preferences and reasons for these preferences according to the following dimensions:

1. Theme of pictures,
2. Color illustration versus monochromatic illustration,
3. General likes and dislikes of pictures,
4. Function of pictures, that is, experience with the whole picture book or experience with the illustration isolated from the picture book, and
5. Sex differences.

The results of this study indicated that children tend to choose the 'toy' and 'animal' themes both for best liked and least liked picture more frequently than the 'children'

and 'imagination' themes. There was a strong pattern related to sex identification when choosing their best liked picture; boys chose pictures portraying boys, and girls chose pictures portraying girls. When expressing their preferences according to the function of the picture, two main patterns emerged: The 'animal' theme was preferred when the function involved the whole picture book; and the 'imagination' theme was preferred when the picture was considered in isolation from the picture book. There was a tendency for the children to prefer colored illustrations. Yet their reasons for choosing these pictures centered mainly on content, adjectives of description, and personal reasons, not on the form (color) of the picture. The children tended to give more overall reasons for their best liked picture compared to their least liked picture. The children stated more reasons for their most preferred themes, 'toys' and 'animals'. Also, for the function of the pictures, they stated more reasons for their most preferred themes, 'animals' and 'imagination'.

What factors may be related to children's picture preferences and their reasons for these preferences? Will patterns emerge in picture preferences and reasons according to content/theme, form/style of illustration, the function of pictures, the child's own personal characteristics or the combination of all of these? This study suggests that perhaps it is the latter.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

> Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank, and of having nothing to do: once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, 'and what is the use of a book,' thought Alice 'without pictures or conversations.' (Carroll, 1954, p. 1)

Indeed, what is the use of a book without pictures? Do young children really prefer books with pictures? Research indicates that books for young children do contain a vast number of pictures. Miller (1936) noted:

> An examination of books suitable for young children reveals an extensive use of color, wide variety of illustrative materials, and marked differences in the techniques of picture making (p. 273).

Although Miller made the above statement in 1936, it also applies to today's picture books for young children. Sister Joseph (1969) made the following statement:

The yearly output of picture books for children is

> remarkable in its number and amazing in its content and variety. .... We are referring here to books where the pictures predominate, where the story is told through the pictures and created for the preschooler and the child in primary grades. ... the pictures have a very special message and bring the books to life for him (p. 32).

The immense number of picture books available and presented to young children may have a great influence upon their attitudes toward books and reading in general. Bloomer (1960) stated:

> It is apparent that children respond not exclusively to pictures they prefer, but to all pictures they see. Different pictures, then, elicit different responses from children. Analysis of their responses should give clues to the subtle differences in communication afforded by different picture forms (p. 334).

Research studies involving picture preferences of children have concentrated on form or style of illustrations (Amsdem, 1960; Bou and Lopez, 1953; Freeman and Freeman, 1933; French, 1952; Miller, 1936; and Williams, 1924). Only a few researchers (Dutton, 1971; Rudisill, 1952; and Williams, 1924) attempted to elicit reasons from children as to why they preferred certain illustrations.

The intent of this study was to examine children's responses to verbal questions regarding their picture preferences. Specifically, the children were asked why they prefer certain pictures and their responses were analyzed in relation to the content and theme of the picture as well as

the form in which the picture was presented.

Purpose of the Study

The purposes of this study were:

1. to determine the patterns of picture preferences of grade one children, and
2. to determine children's reasons for their preferences.

The following research questions were posed to accomplish this two-fold purpose:

1. Will grade one children state preferences among the different pictures portrayed in picture books?
2. Are there patterns in general likes and dislikes of pictures by children?
3. Are the patterns of picture preferences for general likes and dislikes related to the sex of the child, the form (color) of the pictures, the content/theme of the pictures, or the interaction of these?
4. Are the preferences stated by the children related to more specific functions which the pictures may serve?
5. Are the preferences stated by the children related to the combination of the function of the picture and either the form (color) of the picture or the theme of the picture?
6. Will grade one children state the reasons why they prefer some pictures rather than others?
7. What reasons will grade one children state for their general likes and dislikes of pictures?

8. Are the patterns of reasons for general likes and dislikes related to the sex of the child, the form (color) of the picture, the content/theme of the picture, or the interaction of these?
9. Are the reasons stated by the children related to more specific functions which the pictures may serve?
10. Are the reasons stated by the children related to the combination of the function of the picture, and either the form (color) of the picture or the theme of the picture?

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, terms were defined as follows:

Grade One Children are:

1. Children who are in grade one for the first time,
2. Children who come from an area of the city that is not defined by a large urban school board, as a high risk area,
3. Children who are in an English speaking classroom,
4. Children who are in an age range from 6.0 to 7.10, and
5. Children who have no known visual or auditory impairments.

Picture/Illustration: An image or likeness of an object person, or scene produced on a flat surface, especially by painting or drawing.

Content/Theme: What the picture contains and what the picture is about.

Form/Style: The shape or outline including color, density, and the manner in which the artist expresses himself.

Picture Size: Pictures which are approximately in the range of 18 by 45 centimeters.

Picture Preference: The selection of one picture from a group of eight pictures presented.

Reasons: Free verbal responses given by children, to six verbal questions, in support of their picture preferences.

Function of Pictures: Experience with the whole picture book or experience with the illustration isolated from the picture book.

Significance of the Study

The study should have value in that it will add to the rather limited amount of research which has been done on children's reasons for picture preferences. The information should be of interest to those concerned with the selection of picture books for young children. More specifically this study was designed to:

1. Suggest guidelines that can be used to assist parents, teachers, and school librarians in the selection of picture books for young children,
2. Shed some light on past research which did not examine young children's reasons for their picture preferences,

3. Alert the teacher and school librarian to the many factors involved in picture book selection,
4. Give new insight concerning the different kinds of themes and or forms of illustrations children prefer and the reasons why, thus enabling those who select books for young children to increase the validity of their judgement, and
5. Provide insight into whether children choose a particular picture book for its content/theme, form/style of illustration, the function of pictures, or because of the child's own personal characteristics.

Limitations of the Study

A number of limitations must be considered in the interpretations of the findings and conclusions of this study. These are:

1. As the sample of children was small and not randomly selected, caution must be used in generalizing from the data, and
2. The pictures selected did not include all possible themes and forms generally found in picture books.

Organization of the Thesis

Chapter I has described the purposes of the study, listed the specific research questions to be answered, and outlined the significance and limitations of the study. The important terms used in the study have also been defined.

Chapter II contains a detailed review of the literature related to picture preferences of children. Research examining children's reasons for picture preferences is also reviewed.

Chapter III explains the research design used to gather data for the study. It also describes the instrument, and the procedures involved in collecting the data including selecting the picture books and the subjects used in the study.

Chapter IV presents in tabular and written form the findings concerning the patterns of picture preferences of grade one children and their reasons for these preferences.

Chapter V provides a summary of the study, and a discussion of the findings, conclusions, and implications. Recommendations for further research are also included.

Appendix A gives a complete bibliographical entry of the picture books and a description of each of the eight illustrations used in this study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter focuses on the literature which is relevant to the purposes of this study and is divided into two major sections. The first section examines the major conclusions researchers have come to concerning children's preferences for illustrations. In section two the focus is on research regarding children's reasons for picture preferences.

Related Studies on Children's Preferences

Research studies relating to children's preferences for illustrations began in 1924. The following are six major conclusions drawn from research studies regarding the different aspects of illustrations:

1. Subject matter, content, and story interest is one determining factor in children's preferences for illustrations (Bloomer, 1960; Freeman and Freeman, 1933; Hildreth, 1936; Lark-Horovitz, 1937; Levenson, 1951; Lucio and Mead, 1939; Rudisill, 1952; Sister Joseph, 1969; Sloan, 1972; Whipple, 1953; and Williams, 1924),
2. Children choose illustrations that are colored over black and white ones (Amsdem, 1960, Bloomer, 1960; Bou and Lopez

1953; Lark-Horovitz, 1937; Lucio and Mead, 1939; Miller, 1936; Rudisill, 1952; and Whipple, 1953). Primary colors that are rich, dark, and brightly saturated appeal more to children than pastel shades (Bou and Lopez, 1953; Clegg, 1968; Freeman and Freeman, 1933; Levenson, 1951; and Miller, 1936),

3. Factual, realistic, and familiar appearing illustrations are more appealing to children than fanciful, whimsical or ironic ones (Benetic, 1959; Bou and Lopez, 1953; Clegg, 1968; Levenson, 1951; Lucio and Mead, 1939; Mellinger, 1932; Rudisill, 1952; and Williams, 1924),

4. Children like illustrations depicting action which involve people, animals, or objects rather than stationary appearing figures (Freeman and Freeman, 1933; Hildreth, 1936, Levenson, 1951; Lucio and Mead, 1939; Sister Joseph, 1969; and Whipple, 1953),

5. Clear, definite or bold outlines for figures and objects are preferred by children rather than washed-out or blurred obscure shapes (Freeman and Freeman, 1933; French, 1952; and Whipple, 1953), and

6. Children like a few large, easily distinguishable central objects in book illustrations (Bou and Lopez, 1953; Whipple, 1953; and Williams, 1924).

Related Studies on Children's Reasons

Since 1924 the studies conducted by researchers in eliciting picture preferences of young children have seldom asked the children their reasons for making a particular selection. Only seven out of a total of 20 studies attempted to elicit reasons from children as to why they preferred certain pictures. Of these seven studies, six dealt with children's painting preferences and only one dealt with which type of illustration, found in picture books, children prefer.

Painting Preferences

Williams (1924) had 771 fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students visit an exhibit of painting by Richmond artists. Included in this display were 74 oil paintings, water colors, and pastels. As soon as each group arrived, the children were asked to look at the paintings and pick out the one they liked best. Each child wrote the name of the painting they liked best along with the reasons for their selection. Out of 771 votes 603 were distributed among five pictures. Forty-six pictures received less than 20 votes each and 23 pictures received no votes. Williams only reported the children's reasons for Picture 31 called "The Beech Wood." This picture received 329 votes and the reasons the children gave for preferring this picture were, "it's an autumn scene, color, cows, sunshiny day, looks natural and real, way it is painted, I know the place and

stands out well, clear, plain" (p. 123). Some conclusions that Williams came to from his study were:

1. Children like the same pictures and choose pictures that are examples of good painting,
2. Children are interested in pictures which are familiar to them, but will also choose unfamiliar pictures about which they have read or heard about,
3. Children choose pictures that are large and which tell a story, and
4. Children do show some interest in pictures of children.

Almost ten years later Waymack and Hendrickson (1933) had 876 fourth, fifth, and sixth grade children choose their favorite picture, of a famous painting, and write down the reasons for that choice. Four pictures were chosen for presentation in each grade. From these pictures small colored prints were made and each child received four pictures to view and then keep the one they liked best. The children were asked to write why they liked the particular color print that they chose. Upon tabulation of the written responses the data disclosed that the children selected their pictures largely on the basis of color, prettiness, scenery, interest in the people and subjects portrayed, and their own previous experience.

Four hundred and sixty-one average children aged six to 16 along with 72 gifted children aged 11 to 16 viewed 12 famous pictures, of different subjects, and responded to a five item questionnaire which was constructed by

Lark-Horovitz (1937). These 12 pictures were placed in a row, numbered, and shown to small groups of children. Each child made a first, second, third, or more choices if desired, or none if none of the pictures appealed to him. The experimenter took the answers of the younger children (up to 12 years) while the older children wrote their own answers. The group of gifted children, accustomed to discussing pictures, were especially instructed that their choice meant their preferences for the picture they enjoyed and liked the most and not a grading of the picture as to its artistic value. The picture preferences and reasons for these preferences were analyzed by using bar and line graphs. The conclusions reached in this study were:

1. Preferences of children were definite, as a majority of the votes concentrated on a very few pictures,
2. There was a sharp difference in choice between boys and girls at an early age,
3. The reasons given for picture choices centered on the subject or content of the picture, and second on color qualities, and
4. There was a marked difference in the reasons offered by the average and gifted group of children. The average group concentrated on the subject matter, while the gifted group was influenced by the design and the color of the picture, offering more reasons of an emotional and imaginary character.

Lucio and Mead (1939) presented 18 modern pictures to 436 children in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade. All the prints were colored reproductions of the originals. They were numbered from one to 18 and arranged on two large white cardboard sheets so that they could be easily shown before classes. A questionnaire asking the children which picture they liked best and why was given to each child in the classroom before the display was set up. Analyzing the first choices of the children Lucio and Mead found that three pictures received the majority of votes. The following are reasons children gave for liking their first-choice pictures (these reasons are ranked according to frequency of mention):

1. The artist's use of color,
2. A quality expressed by a favorable adjective of description,
3. Individual interests of the children,
4. Realism, and
5. The way the picture was made (p. 688).

A collection of letters received by Levenson (1951), Head of Public Instruction at Worcester Art Museum, prompted her to share the reasons sixth grade students gave in preferring certain pictures. She concluded that:

1. Children like story-telling pictures which are realistically presented,
2. Children like bright colors, and
3. Children prefer what is familiar to them.

Dutton (1971) undertook to identify the kinds of reasons children give for painting preferences. Ninety children from grades one, three, and six were the subjects in the study. Dutton constructed her own classification scale to classify children's reasons for picture preferences. The children viewed fourteen painting reproductions of varied content and style and their reasons were recorded on audio tape. Some conclusions Dutton came to were:

1. Children who have had previous experience in discussing paintings were able to make more refined comments about the intrinsic qualities of paintings,
2. The older children were more aware of art works,
3. Reasons for painting preferences, based on personal feeling, were characteristic of children under ten years of age, and
4. Children tended to choose paintings which were consistent with their own interests.

Illustration Preferences (Picture Books)

Five types of illustrations which occur in books written for children were selected by Rudisill (1952) to determine children's preferences for color versus other qualities in illustrations. To ensure that the type of illustration rather than its content should be the determining factor, the same subject was reproduced in five art types. Three different subjects were used, each being

the picture of a child engaged in an interesting activity with an animal or a toy. There were 2,781 children from kindergarten through grade six and 725 adults involved in this study. The children voted between the pictures by encircling on a ballot the number of the preferred picture. After the voting was done the children were asked to look at all the pictures, discuss them, and give reasons for their preferences. Rudisill came to the following conclusions regarding both preferences and reasons of children's choices:

> 1. In looking at a picture, a child apparently seeks first to recognize its content.
> 2. Any picture (assuming a certain content) proves satisfying to the child in proportion to its success in making that content appear real or life-like. Whether it is colored or uncolored is less important than the appearance of realism.
> 3. A perfect visual representation of realism includes color, and color in pictures proves satisfying to the child in proportion to its success in increasing the impression of realism or lifelikeness (p. 451).

Summary

This chapter was devoted to a review of the literature pertaining to the picture preferences of children. The research in section one revealed that children prefer colored versus black and white illustrations; factual versus fanciful illustrations; action versus stationary objects or figures; clear, definite figures versus blurred, washed out figures; large, easily distinguishable objects versus small figures and minute details; and that subject matter, content, and story interest of illustrations was a determining factor in children's preferences for pictures.

In the second section, studies eliciting reasons from children as to their picture preferences were described. Relatively little research has been done in regards to young children's reasons for picture preferences in picture books. Rudisill (1952) had children from kindergarten to grade six choose the type of illustration found in picture books they preferred and give reasons for their preferences. Dutton (1971) had children from grades one, three and six choose their preferred painting and give a reason for this choice. Most of the reasons cited by the children centered on content or story telling qualities of realistic illustrations, familiarity with content, personal feelings, and color of illustrations.

The present study, using picture book illustrations, undertook to describe the patterns of picture preferences of grade one children and reasons for these preferences.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This chapter outlines the research design and procedures which were used in the study. The chapter begins with a description of the instrument used to elicit from young children their picture preferences and their reasons for these preferences. This is followed by a description of the criteria used in the selection of picture books. The two pilot studies and information regarding the children who participated in the study are reported. Methods followed in collecting and analyzing the data are also outlined.

Instrumentation

One instrument, a six-item verbal questionnaire (see Appendix B), was used to gather and record data on the picture preferences of grade one children and their reasons for these preferences. Eight isolated pictures from eight picture books were used to elicit responses from the children.

The Verbal Questionnaire

Using the questionnaire which Lark-Horovitz (1937) employed in her study, as a guide, the researcher developed a picture preference verbal questionnaire. This verbal questionnaire consists of six main questions with the same two sub questions under each main question. The following are the questions included in the verbal questionnaire.

1. Which picture would you choose to hear the story about?
- Why did you choose that picture?
- Any other reason?
2. Which picture would you choose if you could cut it out and put it or your bedroom wall?
- Why did you choose that picture?
- Any other reason?
3. Which picture would you choose to make up a story about?
- Why did you choose that picture?
- Any other reason?
4. Which picture would you choose to take home and read the story to yourself?
- Why did you choose that picture?
- Any other reason?
5. Which picture do you like best of all?
- Why did you choose that picture?
- Any other reason?
6. Which picture did you not like?
- Why did you choose that picture?
- Any other reason?

- Thank you for answering my questions about the pictures.

Appendix B shows the verbal questionnaire as it was used in the study. Each child had his/her own questionnaire and the random numbers on top of the questionnaire indicate the sequence in which the numbered picture books were displayed.

Criteria for Selection of Picture Books

Three elementary school librarians from a large urban school district were asked to each choose five or more picture books which, in their, opinion had outstanding picture content and form. The following criteria were used in this selection:

1. Theme of pictures included:
    a. Child(ren) with toys,
    b. Child(ren) with other child(ren),
    c. Child(ren) with animals, and
    d. Child(ren) with imaginary object.

The particular theme, children, was selected on the basis of previous studies (Freeman and Freeman, 1933; Miller, 1936; Rudisill, 1952; and Williams, 1924).

2. Form of pictures included a color illustration and a monochromatic illustration for each of the four themes.

A Consultant in Learning Resources selected eight picture books from the total of 20 books chosen earlier by the three elementary school librarians. The Consultant then

selected one illustration from each of the eight books, and it was these eight illustrations which were used in the study.

Preparation of Picture Books

Elastic bands were used to hold each of the eight picture books open at the designated place. Any writing on the page was covered with white cardboard paper. Each book had a number randomly assigned to it. These numbers were generated from a Random Numbers Table. The black 4 by 5 centimeter number was mounted on a 5 by 6 centimeter white card and placed on the designated picture. Care was taken to prevent the black number from obscuring part of the picture. For display purposes, each open book was placed in a metal book holder. The eight picture books were displayed on three separate hexagonal tables in a regular unused classroom.

Pilot Studies

Pilot Study One

Pilot Study one was conducted in February, 1978, to determine the feasibility of a verbal questionnaire regarding children's picture preferences. The sample included 12 children, six from a grade one classroom and six from a grade three classroom. An elementary school librarian selected eight picture books which she thought had outstanding picture content and form. The theme of the pictures was varied and the form included five colored and three monochromatic pictures. Each individual child was shown the eight isolated pictures from the eight different picture books.

From this pilot study the researcher came to the following conclusions:

1. For more effective communication a standard form of verbal communication, used prior to each child viewing the eight pictures and responding to the verbal questionnaire, was neccessary,
2. A sixth question was needed to balance the best liked picture question. Therefore the question, "Which picture do you not like?" was added to the other five questions,
3. Book holders were necessary to facilitate proper display of the pictures,
4. One central theme, with variation in content, and an

equal number of monochromatic and colored pictures were essential to minimize the number of variables involved, and 5. In order to obtain data not influenced by lack of familarity on the part of the children, time must be spent to acquaint the children with the researcher and since time was limited, it would be best to draw the entire sample from one grade in one school.

Pilot Study Two

Using the same grade one classroom as in Pilot Study One, but with 12 different children, Pilot Study Two was conducted in March, 1978. Each individual child was shown eight isolated pictures from eight picture books. These had been selected by four elementary school librarians who employed the Criteria for Selection of Picture Books, as outlined on page 19. The pictures depicted children in four different themes. The form included a color and a monochromatic picture for each of the four themes. Pilot Study Two helped the researcher to derive the final form for:

1. The verbal communication necessary before each child viewed the eight pictures, and
2. The verbal questions that were to be asked as each child viewed the pictures.

This pilot study also led to the following conclusions:

1. One central theme with variation was effective in eliciting responses from young children,

2. In order to avoid possible order effects, rotation of the picture books was necessary. For each child the order was changed by placing the first book last, and moving each book one space,

3. There was enough time to rotate the pictures when one child left the room before another child came,

4. The time range for viewing the pictures and answering the verbal questions was four to seven minutes, and

5. Since two children expressed concern about having to read from the picture books it was necessary to add the following sentence to the verbal communication, "I've put some white paper over the words so you do not have to worry about reading anything."

Setting of the Study

This study was conducted during April, 1978. All the grade one children in one urban school were used in the study. A regular, unused classroom provided the space for the study in which three hexagonal tables were arranged in a semi circle. Two small chairs, one for the child and one for the researcher, were placed in front and to the left side of the middle table. A Sony cassette tape recorder, used to record children's responses, was placed on a stool to the right of the researcher's chair.

Sample

The original sample was 34 grade one children, but four were not included in the sample as they were in grade one for the second year. A total sample of 30 children, 15 male and 15 female, was used in the study.

These children were from an area of the city that is not defined by the school board as a high risk area. More specifically, in the judgement of school board administrative officials, these children are from an upper-middle class district.

Preparation of Sample Children

A total of five consecutive school days were spent in familiarizing the children with the researcher. During this time the following activities were carried out by the researcher:

1. Stories were read, each day, to the children,
2. Lessons were taught in physical education and creative writing,
3. Individual students were helped in their regular school work,
4. Names of each individual child were learned so that conversations could take on a personal flavor,
5. Informal conversations were held with the children during recess time, and
6. The tape recorder was used to tape poems written and recited by the children, songs sung by the children, and

informal conversations.

Becoming acquainted with the children was an important aspect of the study. It meant that the children were at ease with the researcher, and did not have any difficulties responding to the verbal questionnaire. One child, however, due to personal circumstances, did not have as much opportunity to become acquainted with the researcher as did the other children. This child was very apprehensive upon entering the classroom where the picture books were displayed. The following illustrates the researcher's informal conversation with this child before beginning the actual study:

- R. How are you today?
- C. Fine.
- R. Come in and sit down on one of the little chairs.
- C. (Goes to the chair and sits down.)
- R. Did you have a nice time in gym?
- C. (Nods)
- R. Do you like going to gym?
- C. (Nods) Yes. (Smiles)
- R. Would you like to help me and look at some picture books?
- C. (Nods, smiles)

Collection of Data

A procedure was established whereby children's responses were recorded both on the questionnaire and on audio tape for later analysis. The grade one children who participated in the study were told that the researcher was interested in finding out what kinds of pictures children like, and their reasons for these preferences.

The children were asked to pull out of a bag a number to indicate the order in which they would come and see the picture books and help with the study. The following illustrates the researcher's verbal communication with each child, prior to viewing the picture books, in which an attempt was made to put the child at ease.

- Come in and sit down on one of the little chairs.
- Before you look at the pictures in the picture books, I have a little speech I'm going to read to you.
- I want you to look at some pictures found in picture books.
- I'm going to ask you a few questions about these pictures.
- There are no right or wrong answers to my questions, it's what you think about the pictures.
- I've put some white paper over the words so that you do not have to worry about reading anything.
- Each picture has a number.
- You will tell me the number of the picture you choose to answer my questions.

- Do you understand?
- Now you have some time to look at the pictures.
- Please take your time to look at the pictures carefully. When you have finished looking come and sit on the chair beside me.
- Come and look at the pictures.

After each child had viewed the eight pictures, the researcher's continued verbal communication is illustrated as follows:

- This is my chart with the questions I'm going to ask you.
- I'm going to put the tape recorder on so that I can record everything you and I say. I can't write as quickly as we talk.
- Please look at the pictures as I ask you the questions.

At this point in the study, the tape recorder was switched on and the researcher proceeded with the verbal questionnaire (see Appendix B). The verbal questionnaire was supplemented with "Pardon me?" and "Can you explain again, please?" if the child spoke too softly and/or the meaning of what the child said was unclear.

At the end of the verbal questionnaire, each child was thanked for helping with the picture books. The child was then asked to go back to the classroom so that the next child would know when to come.

To avoid possible order effects, the researcher rotated the picture books by always putting the first book last and having the corresponding numbered questionnaire ready for

the next child. This was done during the interval when one child left the room and before another child came. The interview time with each child ranged from three to ten minutes, with an average time of five minutes per child.

Analysis of Findings

A six-item verbal questionnaire was used to determine the picture preferences and kinds of reasons given for these preferences. The frequency of responses were totalled and two charts were drawn up, one to show the frequency of responses of picture preferences and one to show the reasons for these preferences.

The six-item verbal questionnaire represents three categories:

1. Questions 1, 2, 3, and 4 dealt with the function of pictures,
2. Question 5 dealt with the best liked picture, and
3. Question 6 dealt with the least liked picture.

The questions referring to the function of pictures were further subdivided into two categories:

1. Questions 1 and 4 were related to experiences with the whole picture book, and
2. Questions 2 and 3 were related to experiences with the illustration isolated from the picture book.

The eight pictures were an equal number of color and monochromatic illustrations and represented four different themes. The data were subdivided according to form (color) and theme of illustration.

Drawing on Dutton (1971), Lark-Horovitz (1937), Lucio and Mead (1939), and Waymack and Henrickson (1933), a "Six-Item Classification of Reasons Chart" was constructed to classify the children's reasons for their picture preferences (see Appendix C).

Comparisons were made between male and female children with relation to their picture preferences and reasons for these preferences.

Thus frequencies of responses were compared and contrasted within the many categories described above.

Summary

A questionnaire was designed and administered to a group of 30 grade one children in order to determine their picture preferences and their reasons for these preferences. Eight isolated pictures from eight different picture books were used to elicit responses from the children. The pictures varied in theme and form (color).

The data, for this study, were collected by the use of both a questionnaire and on audio tape. These were later transcribed and the data tabulated into a picture preference frequency chart. The children's reasons were also

categorized and charted.

Analysis of the data involved comparing and contrasting the frequency of responses both for picture preferences and reasons for these preferences.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter presents the data gathered for the study, describes its analysis, and presents the findings in terms of the research questions posed in Chapter I. A tally was made of children's responses to the six verbal questions which required them to indicate their picture preferences and their reasons for these preferences. In searching for patterns in children's responses, the data were formed into frequency tables. Examination of these frequencies revealed a variety of patterns. The findings related to children's picture preferences are reported first, followed by the findings related to the reasons children stated for their picture preferences. A summary of the major findings is reported in each section.

Children's Picture Preferences

Several of the research questions were related to the children's picture preferences. Each of the questions is answered separately.

Question One

Will grade one children state preferences among the different pictures portrayed in picture books?

Thirty children participated in the study. Table 1 reports the frequency of their responses to each of the six verbal questions asked. The total number of responses is 179 out of a possible 180. One child did not state a picture that was liked least, but rather stated that all pictures had equal appeal for him. Table 1 shows that grade one children will state preferences among the different pictures portrayed in picture books.

Table 1

Children's Overall Picture Preferences

Pictures	Questions					
Child with	#1Hear story	#2Hang on wall	#3Make up story	#4Take home,read	#5Best liked	#6Least liked
#1 Toy Mono*	1	1	4	1	3	5
#2 Toy Color*	3	7	3	2	6	4
#3 Child Color	3	4	4	4	4	2
#4 Child Mono	0	1	4	3	2	3
#5 Animal Mono	9	2	2	5	4	6
#6 Animal Color	5	4	3	5	5	2
#7 Imagine Color	8	5	4	8	3	3
#8 Imagine Mono	1	6	6	2	3	4

Note. N=30 for questions 1 through 5.

N=29 for question 6.

*Monochromatic illustrations; Colored illustrations.

Question Two

Are there patterns in general likes and dislikes of pictures by children?

Table 2 illustrates that there are no outstanding patterns of children's likes and dislikes. All pictures were named as best liked and as least liked. The picture chosen most often as best liked was picture number 2, but while six students chose it as best liked, it was least liked by four students. Similarily, the picture chosen most often (number 5, six times) as least liked was best liked by four students. The largest difference for any one picture was three (picture number 6).

Table 2

Children's Likes and Dislikes

Pictures	Questions	
	#5 Best Liked	#6 Least Liked
#1	3	5
#2	6	4
#3	4	2
#4	2	3
#5	4	6
#6	5	2
#7	3	3
#8	3	4

Note. N=30 for question number 5.

N=29 for question number 6.

Question Three

Are the patterns of picture preferences for general likes and dislikes related to the sex of the child, the form (color) of the pictures, the content/theme of the pictures, or the interaction of these?

Question Three will be answered in five parts.

Part One: Sex of the child and preferences.

Table 3 illustrates that there are no prominent picture preferences when considering the independent variable of sex. There is a relatively even distribution between girls and boys. Girls seem to vary slightly more than boys on both likes and dislikes as indicated by the range. Picture number 6 shows the greatest difference for best liked picture and picture number 4 shows the greatest difference for least liked pictures.

Table 3

Likes and Dislikes Grouped by Sex

Pictures	Questions			
	#5 Best Liked		#6 Least liked	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
#1	2	1	3	2
#2	3	3	2	2
#3	3	1	0	2
#4	1	1	4	0
#5	3	1	2	4
#6	0	5	2	0
#7	1	2	1	2
#8	2	1	1	3
Range	0-3	1-5	0-4	0-4
	3	4	4	4

Note. N=30 for question number 5.

N=29 for question number 6

Part Two: Form (color) and preferences.

Responses are grouped according to whether the children refer to colored pictures (numbers 2,3,6,and 7) or to monochromatic pictures (numbers 1,4,5,and 8).

Table 4 illustrates perhaps a mild preference for colored pictures compared to monochromatic pictures. There were more colored pictures named as best liked than nomocramatic pictures named as best liked. There were more monochromatic pictures named as least liked than colored pictures named as least liked.

Table 4

Childrens's Likes and Dislikes Grouped by Form (Color)

Form	Questions	
	#5 Best Liked	#6 Least Liked
Color	18	11
Mono	12	18

Note. N=30 for question number 5.
N=29 for question number 6.

Part Three: Content/theme and preferences.

Responses in Table 5 are grouped according to the preferences shown for picture theme. No strong pattern is evident in Table 5. Toy and animal themes were chosen more often as best liked over children and imagination themes. But the same pattern existed for least liked pictures. Perhaps toys and animals are topics about which there is the greatest difference in children's likes and dislikes.

Table 5

Children's likes and Dislikes Grouped by Theme

Themes	Questions	
	#5 Best Liked	#6 Least Liked
Toy	9	9
Children	6	5
Animal	9	8
Imagination	6	7

Note. N=30 for question number 5.
N=29 for question number 6.

Part Four: Relationship between sex, form (color), and preferences.

Table 6 shows that for best liked picture more girls than boys preferred colored illustrations, while the boys showed almost no difference between colored and monochromatic illustrations. Monochromatic pictures were least liked by both male and female children.

Table 6

Likes and Dislikes Grouped by Sex and Form (Color)

Form	Questions			
	#5 Best Liked		#6 Least Liked	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Color	7	11	5	6
Mono	8	4	9	9

Note. N=30 for question number 5.
N=29 for question number 6.

Part Five: Relationship between sex, theme, and preferences.

No overall strong pattern is evident in Table 7. There is some indication that girls prefer the animal theme. Five of the six girls selected one picture, picture number 6 which had a girl with animals in it. This raises the question of whether preferences are related to sex identification with an individual or individuals in the picture.

Table 7

Likes and Dislikes Grouped by Sex and Theme

Themes	Questions			
	#5 Best Liked		#6 Least Liked	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Toy	5	4	5	4
Children	4	2	3	2
Animal	3	6	4	4
Imagination	3	3	2	5

Note. N=30 for question number 5.
N=29 for question number 6.

In order to examine the possibility of sex identificatcn patterns, the data were regrouped according to the sex of the child depicted in each illustration. Table 8 illustrates a fairly strong pattern; boys prefer pictures portraying boys, while girls prefer pictures portraying girls. A fairly even preference distribution is evident for pictures in which sex is ambiguous (reference is made here to picture number 7, where only the top half of a child's face was visible) or pictures which include both sexes.

Table 8

Likes and Dislikes Grouped by Sex Identification

Pictures	Questions			
	#5 Best Liked		#6 Least Liked	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Boy in picture #'s 2,5,8	8	5	5	9
	x=2.7*	1.7	1.7	3
Girl in picture #'s 1,6	2	6	5	2
	x=1	3	2.5	1
Both Sexes #'s 3,4,7	5	4	4	4
	x=1.7	1.3	1.3	1.3

Note. N=30 for question number 5.
N=29 for question number 6.

*Mean frequency (unequal number of pictures).

Question Four

Are the preferences stated by the children related to more specific functions which the pictures may serve?

This question is answered in two parts.

Part One: Patterns in preferences.

Which preference will emerge given different functions for stating the preferences? Table 9 illustrates no consistent pattern. The ranges within each function are not vastly different. There appears, however, to be greater uniformity when children were asked to consider making up a story.

Table 9

Children's Preferences Grouped by Four Functions of Pictures

Pictures	Questions			
	#1 Hear story	#2 Hang on wall	#3 Make up story	#4 Take home read
#1	1	1	4	1
#2	3	7	3	2
#3	3	4	4	4
#4	0	1	4	3
#5	9	2	2	5
#6	5	4	3	5
#7	8	5	4	8
#8	1	6	6	2
Range	0-9	1-7	2-6	1-8
	9	6	4	7

Note: N=30 for questions 1-4.

Part Two: Patterns of preferences of combined functions.

Responses are grouped according to the functions involving the child, that is, when function is related to experience with the whole picture book (questions 1 and 4) or when function is related to experience with the illustration isolated from the picture book (questions 2 and 3).

Table 10 indicates that involvement with the whole picture book seems to induce selection of pictures 5, 6, and 7; while involvement with the illustration isolated from the picture book induces selection of pictures 2, 7, and 8. Picture 7 is picked for both functions. There is also a greater range for involvement with the whole picture book. The theme or form may be interacting with the function of pictures. This is dealt with in Question Five.

Table 10

Children's Preferences Grouped by Two Functions of Pictures

Pictures	Questions	
	#1 & #4	#2 & #3
#1	2	5
#2	5	10
#3	7	8
#4	3	5
#5	14	4
#6	10	7
#7	16	9
#8	3	12
Range	2-16	4-12
	14	8

Note. N=60 for each combined group.

Question Five

Are the preferences stated by the children related to the combination of the function of the picture and either the form (color) of the picture or the theme of the picture?

Question Five is answered in two parts.

Part One: Relationship between function, form (color), and preferences.

Table 11 illustrates that color is preferred more, regardless of function. There is a slightly stronger preference for colored pictures when function relates to experience with the whole picture book than with the isolated illustration. For monochromatic illustrations the reverse is true, that is, more children prefer the monochromatic picture when related to the isolated illustration than when related to experience with the whole picture book.

Table 11

Children's Preferences Grouped by Function of Pictures and Form (Color)

Form	Questions	
	#1 & #4	#2 & #3
Color	38	34
Mono	22	26

Note. N=60 for each combined group.

Part Two: Relationship between function, theme, and preferences.

Table 12 shows that the animal theme was chosen more often when related to experience with the whole picture book. The imagination theme was chosen more often when related to experience with the illustration isolated from the picture book.

Table 12

Children's Preferences Grouped by Function of Pictures and Theme

Themes	Questions	
	#1 & #4	#2 & #3
Toy	7	15
Children	10	13
Animal	24	11
Imagination	19	21

Note. N=60 for each combined group.

Summary of Findings Related to Children's Picture Preferences

There were 30 grade one children who participated in the study. These children were asked to view eight isolated pictures from eight different picture books and answer six verbal questicns regarding their picture preferences. The children stated 179 out of a total possible of 180 picture preference responses.

The following patterns existed in general likes and dislikes of pictures:

1. All pictures were named as best liked and least liked,
2. Girls tended to vary slightly more than boys on both likes and dislikes,
3. There were more colored pictures named as best liked than monochromatic pictures named as best liked,
4. There were more monochromatic pictures named as least liked than colored pictures named as least liked,
5. The toy and animal themes were chosen most often as best liked, but the same two themes were also chosen most often as least liked,
6. Color was more frequently cited as in best liked preferences by girls as compared to boys,
7. Monochromatic illustrations were equally least liked by both boys and girls,
8. There was a strong pattern related to sex identification

for best liked; girls tended to choose pictures portraying girls and boys chose pictures portraying boys,

9. There was a strong opposite pattern related to sex identificatiocn for least liked picture; boys chose pictures portraying girls and girls chose pictures portraying boys, and

10. There was an even distribution of male and female responses for ambiguous or both sexes in pictures for both best and least liked illustration.

The following patterns were evident in relation to the functions of pictures:

1. No single function emerged as more frequently chosen than the others, but there was more uniformity when the function involved making up a story,

2. Functions related to experience with the whole picture book induced the most frequent selection of pictures 5, 6, and 7; while involvement with the illustration isolated from the picture book induced the most frequent selection of pictures 2, 7, and 8,

3. Colored illustrations were preferred to monochromatic illustrations regardless of the function of the pictures,

4. Theme produced more prominent patterns when function was related to experience with the whole picture book,

5. The animal theme was most popular when related to experience with the whole picture book. By contrast the animal theme was the least popular when related to the illustration isolated from the picture book, and

6. The imagination theme was most popular when related to the illustration isolated from the picture book.

Children's Reasons for Picture Preferences

Children's picture preferences for each of the six verbal questions have been discussed in the preceding section. To answer the research questions regarding children's reasons for their picture preferences, the construction of a Six-Item Classification of Reasons Chart was necessary (see Appendix C for a more detailed account of this chart). The six items, which included content, form (color), adjectives of description, personal, irrelevant, and no reason, were derived from previous studies (Dutton, 1971; Lark-Horovitz, 1937; Lucio and Mead, 1939; and Waymack and Henrickson, 1933).

An intercoder reliability check was conducted to establish an index of the reliability of this classification of children's reasons. One individual coder classified a total of 107 reasons which the children gave for verbal questions 1 and 5. When compared with the researcher's coding, an intercoder agreement of 90.7% was achieved.

Each of the research questions pertaining to children's reasons for picture preferences (questions six to ten) is answered seperately.

Question Six

Will grade one children state the reasons why they prefer some pictures rather than others?

Each of the six verbal questions had two other questions asking the children their reasons for a particular picture selection. The total number of reasons a child was requested to give, for the six verbal questions, was a maximum of 12, or none if the child chose to give no reasons for his/her picture preferences. A possible total of 360 reasons could be given by 30 children. Table 13 indicates the number of reasons the children gave for the six verbal questions. Totalling the first five categories, excluding No Reason, provides a total of 275 reasons that were given by the grade one children in support of their picture preferences. There were only eight instances when children did not give a reason to support their picture preferences. The answer to Question Six is that with few exceptions, children will state reasons why they prefer some pictures rather than others.

Table 13

Children's Reasons for the Six Verbal Questions

Questions	Categories					
	Con/ tent	Form color	Adj.of Des.	Per/ sonal	Irrel/ evant	No Rea/ son
#1 Hear Story	16	3	18	13	1	3
#2 Make up Story	15	3	15	12	2	1
#3 Hang on Wall	30	2	8	8	0	2
#4 Take home Read	17	0	14	11	2	1
#5 Best Liked	25	6	12	7	1	0
	Lacking content	No color				
#6 Least Liked	8	6	9	11	0	1
Total	111	20	76	62	6	8

Question Seven

What reasons will grade one children state for their general likes and dislikes of pictures?

Tables 14 and 15 illustrate the reasons children gave for their picture preferences (likes and dislikes). The children gave more reasons for best liked picture (51) than for least liked picture (34). They also stated more content reasons for their best liked picture, while for their least liked picture more personal reasons were stated.

Table 14

Children's Reasons for Best Liked Picture

Pictures	Categories					
	Con/ tent	Form color	Adj.of Des.	Per/ sonal	Irrel/ evant	No Rea/ son
#1	1	0	0	3	0	0
#2	3	2	4	1	1	0
#3	1	0	3	1	0	0
#4	3	0	0	0	0	0
#5	2	0	2	2	0	0
#6	5	4	3	0	0	0
#7	4	0	0	0	0	0
#8	6	0	0	0	0	0
Total	25	6	12	7	1	0

Table 15

Children's Reasons for Least Liked Picture

Pictures	Categories					
	Con/ tent	Form color	Adj.of Des.	Per/ sonal	Irrel/ evant	No Rea/ son
#1	1	4	0	0	0	1
#2	0	0	2	3	0	0
#3	1	0	1	0	0	0
#4	1	1	1	0	0	0
#5	3	0	3	3	0	0
#6	0	0	0	2	0	0
#7	1	0	2	0	0	0
#8	1	1	0	3	0	0
Total	8	6	9	11	0	1

Question Eight

Are the patterns of reasons for general likes and dislikes related to the sex of the child, the form (color) of the pictures, the content/theme of the pictures, or the interaction of these?

Question Eight will be answered in five parts.

Part One: Sex of the child and reasons for preferences.

Table 16 illustrates that girls tended to give more content and form (color) reasons than boys for best liked picture. In the other categories frequencies are fairly evenly distributed. For the least liked picture (Table 17) girls again gave more content reasons than boys. Girls gave more personal reasons for least liked picture while the boys gave more adjective of description reasons. In the other categories frequencies are evenly distributed.

Table 16

Reasons for Best Liked Picture Grouped by Sex

Pictures	Con/ tent		Form color		Adj.of Des.		Per/ sonal		Irrel/ evant		No Rea/ son	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
#1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0
#2	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	0	0	1	0	0
#3	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
#4	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
#5	2	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
#6	0	5	0	4	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
#7	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
#8	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	11	14	1	5	6	6	4	3	0	1	0	0

Table 17

Reasons for Least Liked Picture Grouped by Sex

Pictures	Categories											
	Lack Con/ tent		No Form color		Adj.of Des.		Per/ sonal		Irrel/ evant		No Rea/ son	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
#1	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
#2	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	0
#3	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
#4	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
#5	1	2	0	0	2	1	0	3	0	0	0	0
#6	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
#7	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
#8	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0
Total	3	5	3	3	6	3	4	7	0	0	1	0

Part Two: Form (color) and reasons for preferences.

Responses are grouped according to whether the children gave reasons with reference to colored pictures (numbers 2,3,6, and 7) or monochromatic pictures (numbers 1,4,5, and 8).

Table 18 shows some interesting patterns in children's reasons for best and least liked pictures according to form (color). The children gave more reasons (32) for best liked colored picture than for least liked colored picture. They also gave more reasons (22) for least liked monochromatic picture than for best liked monochromatic picture. The content related reasons for both colored and monochromatic best liked illustration were fairly evenly distributed. There were six instances where color was mentioned for best liked picture and six instances where lack of color was mentioned for least liked picture.

Table 18

Children's Reasons for Best Liked and Least Liked Pictures Grouped by Form (Color)

Form	Categories											
	Con/ tent		Form color		Adj.of Des.		Per/ sonal		Irrel/ evant		No Rea/ son	
	B*	L*	B	L	B	L	B	L	B	L	B	L
Color	13	2	6	0	10	5	2	5	1	0	0	0
Mono	12	6	0	6	2	4	5	6	0	0	0	1
Total	25	8	6	6	12	9	7	11	1	0	0	1

*(B) Best liked; (L) Least Liked.

Part Three: Content/theme and reasons for preferences.

Responses in Table 19 are grouped according to the theme. A pattern is evident in Table 19 in that content reasons for all four themes are more frequent for best liked picture as compared to content reasons for least liked picture. The imagination theme received more content reasons while the animal theme received more adjective of description reasons as being the best liked picture. The rest of the reasons are fairly evenly distributed among the other categories. The animal and toy themes received the greatest number of reasons across the first five categories for best liked picture, and the same is true for least liked picture. This same result was evident in the preceding section, Children's Picture Preferences, Question Three, Part Three, in which toys and animals were the most selected themes. Children gave more reasons for their most preferred themes.

Table 19

Children's Reasons for Best Liked and Least Liked Pictures Grouped by Theme

Themes	Categories											
	Con/ tent		Form color		Adj.of Des.		Per/ sonal		Irrel/ evant		No Rea/ son	
	B*	L*	B	L	B	L	B	L	B	L	B	L
Toy	4	1	2	4	4	2	4	3	1	0	0	1
Children	4	2	0	1	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Animal	7	3	4	0	5	3	2	5	0	0	0	0
Imagine	10	2	0	1	0	2	0	3	0	0	0	0
Total	25	8	6	6	12	9	7	11	1	0	0	1

*(B) Best Liked; (L) Least Liked.

Part Four: a) Relationship between sex, form (color) for best liked picture, and reasons for preferences.

Table 20 indicates that across the first five categories girls stated more reasons (23) than boys for colored pictures while boys stated more reasons (13) for monochromatic pictures. Girls also tended to give more content and form (color) reasons for both colored and monochromatic illustrations. The other categories are fairly evenly distributed .

Table 20

Reasons for Best Liked Picture Grouped by Form (Color) and Sex

Form	Categories											
	Con/ tent		Form color		Adj.of Des.		Per/ sonal		Irrel/ evant		No Rea/ son	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Color	3	10	1	5	4	6	1	1	0	1	0	0
Mono	8	4	0	0	2	0	3	2	0	0	0	0
Total	11	14	1	5	6	6	4	3	0	1	0	0

Part Four: b) Relationship between sex, form (color) for least liked picture, and reasons for preferences.

Table 21 illustrates that the reasons children give for least liked picture for both colored and monochromatic illustrations, across the first five categories, is evenly distributed for both male and female children. There is a tendency for girls to give a few more personal reasons, while boys tend to give more adjective of description reasons for least liked picture.

Table 21

Reasons for Least Liked Picture Grouped by Form (Color) and Sex

Form	Categories											
	Lack Con/ tent		No Form color		Adj.of Des.		Per/ sonal		Irrel/ evant		No Rea/ son	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Color	0	2	0	0	3	2	3	2	0	0	0	0
Mono	3	3	3	3	3	1	1	5	0	0	1	0
Total	3	5	3	3	6	3	4	7	0	0	1	0

Part Five: a) Relationship between sex, theme for best liked picture, and reasons for preferences.

Table 22 shows that the girls gave more reasons (13) across the five categories for the animal theme. The other three themes had a fairly even distribution of reasons. For all four themes the girls tended to give more content and form (color) reasons.

Table 22

Reasons for Best Liked Picture Grouped by Theme and Sex

Themes	Categories											
	Con/ tent		Form color		Adj.of Des.		Per/ sonal		Irrel/ evant		No Rea/ son	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Toy	2	2	1	1	2	2	3	1	0	1	0	0
Children	2	2	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Animal	2	5	0	4	2	3	1	1	0	0	0	0
Imagine	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	11	14	1	5	6	6	4	3	0	1	0	0

Part Five: b) Relationship between sex, theme for least liked picture, and reasons for preferences.

Table 23 shows that the girls stated more reasons across the five categories for the imagination and animal themes, while the boys stated more reasons for the toy and children themes.

Table 23

Reasons for Least Liked Picture Grouped by Theme and Sex

Themes	Categories											
	Lack Con/ tent		No Form color		Adj.of Des.		Per/ sonal		Irrel/ evant		No Rea/ son	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Toy	1	0	2	2	2	0	1	2	0	0	1	0
Children	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Animal	1	2	0	0	2	1	2	3	0	0	0	0
Imagine	0	2	0	1	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	0
Total	3	5	3	3	6	3	4	7	0	0	1	0

Question Nine

Are the reasons stated by the children related to more specific functions which the pictures may serve?

This question is answered in two parts.

Part One: Patterns of reasons as related to function.

Which reasons will emerge given different functions for stating the reasons?

Table 24 illustrates the reasons given for the first four verbal questions which dealt with function of pictures. There were a total of 190 reasons stated for the function of pictures. Verbal questions 1, 2, and 4 had fairly even distribution of reasons given in each category. Verbal question 3, which dealt with making up a story, received the most content reasons (almost double the content reasons stated for the other three verbal questions). It was also interesting to note that question 3 received the least number of reasons in the other categories. It would seem that when children want to make up a story about a picture, they look at the content of that picture.

Table 24

Children's Reasons Grouped by Four Functions of Pictures

Pictures	Categories and Questions																			
	Con/ tent				Form color				Adj.of Des.				Per/ sonal				Irrel/ evant				No Rea/ son			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
#1	0	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
#2	1	4	2	0	1	3	0	0	3	5	1	2	1	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
#3	1	2	6	6	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
#4	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
#5	6	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	3	4	4	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
#6	3	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	3	1	1	2	1	2	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
#7	3	2	4	4	0	0	1	0	7	3	3	3	5	2	0	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
#8	2	4	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
T	16		30		3	3	2	0	15		8		13		8		1	2	0	2	3	1	2	1
	15		17						18		14		12		11									

Part Two: Patterns of reasons for combined functions.

Responses are grouped according to the functions involving the child, that is, when function is related to experience with the whole picture book (questions 1 and 4) or when function is related to experience with the illustration isolated from the picture book (questions 2 and 3).

Table 25 shows that involvement with the whole picture book elicited more adjective of description and personal reasons, while involvement with the illustration isolated from the picture book elicited more content and form (color) reasons. Picture numbers 5, 6, and 7 received more reasons for involvement with the whole picture book, while picture numbers 2, 7, and 8 received the most reasons for involvement with the illustration isolated from the picture book. The pictures which had the most reasons were the same ones that the children picked in Picture Preferences, Question Four, Part Two.

Table 25

Children's Reasons Grouped by Two Functions of Pictures

Pictures	Categories and Questions											
	Con/ tent		Form color		Adj.of Des.		Per/ sonal		Irrel/ evant		No Rea/ son	
	1-4	2-3	1-4	2-3	1-4	2-3	1-4	2-3	1-4	2-3	1-4	2-3
#1	0	7	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0
#2	1	6	1	3	5	6	1	4	0	1	1	1
#3	7	8	0	1	1	0	2	1	0	1	0	0
#4	1	4	0	0	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	0
#5	10	1	0	0	7	1	6	6	0	0	1	0
#6	5	4	2	0	5	2	5	2	0	0	0	1
#7	7	6	0	1	10	6	8	2	2	0	1	0
#8	2	9	0	0	2	5	0	2	0	0	0	1
T	33	45	3	5	32	23	24	20	3	2	4	3

Question Ten

Are the reasons stated by the children related to the function of the picture and either the form (color) in the picture or the theme in the picture.

This question is answered in two parts.

Part One: Relationship between function, form (color), and reasons for preferences.

Table 26 illustrates that colored pictures received the most reasons (62 and 54) regardless of function for which the reasons were stated, though very few of these reasons cited color specifically.

Table 26

Children's Reasons Grouped by Functions of Pictures and Form (Color)

Form	Categories and Functions											
	Con/ tent		Form color		Adj.of Des.		Per/ sonal		Irrel/ evant		No Rea/ son	
	W*	I*	W	I	W	I	W	I	W	I	W	I
Color	20	24	3	5	21	14	16	9	2	2	2	2
Mono	13	21	0	0	11	9	8	11	1	0	2	1
Total	33	45	3	5	32	23	24	20	3	2	4	3

*(W) Whole picture book; (I) Isolated illustration.

Part Two: Relationship between function, theme, and reasons for preferences.

Table 27 shows that, of the four themes, the animal theme received the most reasons (40) across the first five categories for experience with the whole picture book, and imagination received the most reasons (33) for experience with the illustration isolated from the picture book. This result is similiar to Children's Picture Preferences, Question Five, Part Two, in the preceding section where it was found that more children preferred the animal theme as related to experience with the whole picture book and the imagination theme as related to the isolated illustration. The two themes, animal and imagination had the greatest range of reasons for both experience with the whole picture book and the illustration isolated from the picture book.

Table 27

Children's Reasons Grouped by Functions of Pictures and Theme

Themes	Categories and Functions											
	Con/ tent		Form color		Adj.of Des.		Per/ sonal		Irrel/ evant		No Rea/ son	
	W*	I*	W	I	W	I	W	I	W	I	W	I
Toy	1	13	1	3	5	7	1	5	1	1	2	1
Child.	8	12	0	1	3	2	4	3	0	1	0	0
Anim.	15	5	2	0	12	3	11	8	0	0	1	1
Imag.	9	15	0	1	12	11	8	4	2	0	1	1
Total	33	45	3	5	32	23	24	20	3	2	4	3

*(W) Whole picture book; (I) Isolated illustration.

Summary of Findings Related to Children's Reasons for Their Picture Preferences

There were 30 grade one children who participated in the study. When answering the six verbal questions they stated 275 reasons in support of their picture preferences.

The following patterns existed in the reasons given for picture likes and dislikes:

1. Children gave more overall reasons for their best liked picture as compared to their least liked picture,
2. Children stated more content reasons for their best liked picture,
3. Children stated more personal reasons for their least liked picture,
4. Girls tended to give more content reasons for both best and least liked picture,
5. Girls tended to give more personal reasons while boys gave more adjective of description reasons for least liked picture,
6. There were more reasons stated for best liked colored picture as compared to least liked colored picture,
7. There were more reasons stated for least liked monochromatic picture compared to best liked monochromatic picture,
8. The two themes, animal and toy, received the most reasons for best liked picture and least liked picture,

9. Girls tended to state more reasons for their best liked colored picture while boys tended to state more reasons for their best liked monochromatic picture,
10. There was a fairly even distribution among boys and girls in the reasons given for least liked monochromatic and colored illustrations,
11. Girls tended to give more reasons for their best liked theme, animals, while the reasons stated for the other themes were fairly evenly distributed, and
12. For least liked illustration the boys gave more reasons for the toy and children themes while the girls gave more reasons for the animal and imagination themes.

The following patterns existed in function of pictures:
1. Verbal questions 1, 2, and 4 had fairly even distribution of reasons given across the five categories,
2. Verbal question 3 had double the content reasons of the other three questions,
3. Verbal question 3 received the least number of reasons in the other categories,
4. Combining function of pictures, that is, experience with the whole picture book induced more adjective of description and personal reasons, while involvement with the illustration isolated from the picture book induced more content reasons,
5. Picture numbers 5, 6, and 7 received the most reasons for experience with the whole picture book, while picture numbers 2, 7, and 8 received the most reasons for

involvement with the isolated illustration,

6. Colored pictures received the most reasons regardless of the picture's function, and

7. The animal theme received the most reasons for experience with the whole picture book, while the imagination theme received the most reasons for experience with the isolated illustration.

Summary

This study has shown that grade one children, when confronted with eight isolated pictures from eight different picture books, have individual picture preferences, and can state reasons for these preferences. Children tended to choose the animal and toy themes for both their best liked and least liked pictures. There was a strong pattern related to sex identification when choosing their best liked picture, with boys choosing pictures portraying boys and girls choosing pictures portraying girls. The animal theme was popular when related to experience with the whole picture book and the imagination theme was popular when related to the illustration isolated from the picture book. There was also a tendency for the children to prefer colored illustrations for both best liked picture and function of pictures. The children tended to give more overall reasons for their best liked picture than for their least liked picture. More content reasons were stated for their best liked picture, while for the least liked picture more

personal reasons were stated. The toy and animal themes received more reasons than the imagination and children themes for both best liked and least liked picture. The animal theme received the most reasons when related to experience of the whole picture book while the imagination theme received the most reasons when related to the illustration isolated from the picture book. The children stated more reasons in support of the pictures they preferred (questions 1-5) than for picture they didn't prefer.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter presents a brief summary of the methodology and major findings of the study. Some conclusions and implications drawn from the study and suggestions for future research are also discussed.

Summary

Purpose and Methodology

The purposes of this study were:

1. To examine the patterns of picture preferences of grade one children, and
2. To investigate children's reasons for these preferences.

A six-item verbal questionnaire was used to elicit responses from 30 grade one children. Each child viewed eight isolated pictures from eight picture books and was questioned in regards to his/her picture preferences and reasons for these preferences. The data were recorded both on a questionnaire and on audio tape. The data were transformed into two frequency charts, one each for the children's picture preferences and one for their reasons.

Analysis of data involved comparing and contrasting the frequency of responses for both the picture preferences of grade one children and their reasons for these preferences.

Review of the Findings

Picture Preferences.

Results indicated that grade one children do have picture preferences when confronted with eight isolated pictures involving children engaged in four different themes. There was a strong pattern related to sex identification for best liked picture; girls chose pictures portraying girls and boys chose pictures portraying boys. Colored pictures were named more as best liked, while monochromatic pictures were named more as least liked illustrations. The toy and animal themes were both chosen for best liked and least liked picture more frequently than the children and imagination themes. Children tended to prefer colored pictures regardless of the picture's function. Theme had a greater influence when function was related to experience with the whole picture book as compared to the illustration isolated from the picture book. The animal theme was popular with the children when it related to the whole picture book, while the imagination theme was popular when it related to the isolated

illustration.

Reasons for picture preferences.

The children tended to give more reasons for their best liked picture as compared to their least liked picture. More content reasons were stated for their best liked picture while the least liked picture received more personal reasons. The toy and animal themes received the most reasons for both best liked and least liked picture. This is in keeping with the children's picture preferences; toys and animals were chosen both for best and least liked picture. Children gave more reasons for their preferred picture regardless of the picture's function. The animal theme received the most reasons when related to experience with the whole picture book, and the imagination theme received the most reasons when related to the illustration isolated from the picture book. Children gave more overall reasons for the pictures which they preferred (questions 1-5).

Conclusions and Implications

Previous studies indicate that children do have preferences when confronted with different types of illustrations found in picture books and with prints of famous paintings. This study involved grade one children. The children viewed eight isolated pictures from eight picture books in an attempt to elicit their picture preferences and reasons for these preferences. This study supports Bloomer's (1960) statement that:

> It is apparent that children respond not exclusively to pictures they prefer, but to all pictures they see. Different pictures, then elicit different responses from children. Analysis of their responses should give clues to the subtle differences in communication afforded by different picture forms (p. 334).

The children did respond to all the pictures they saw when answering the six verbal questions regarding function of pictures and their best liked and least liked picture. Not one picture received more than ten votes for either function of pictures or best liked and least liked picture. Different pictures therefore communicated differently to each child, as their responses were highly idiosyncratic. There was a tendency for the children in this study to select colored illustrations as preferred to monochromatic illustrations. Yet, their reasons for choosing the pictures centered mainly on content, adjectives of description and personal reasons, not on the form (color) of the picture.

In choosing picture books for young children one should be aware of their picture preferences and, most important, their reasons for these preferences. Whipple (1953) and Bloomer (1960) suggest that an interesting factor when considering the selction of picture books, is the narrative interest value, or more precisely, the stimulating qualities of different types of pictures. The findings of this study indicated that the eight isolated pictures did have different stimulating qualities for each child. Other factors revealed by this study, should also include the following considerations when selecting picture books for young children, such as:

1. A variety of themes to meet individual needs should be considered as all four themes were chosen by the children in this study,
2. The portrayal of both sexes in picture books would be beneficial as children tend to identify with their own sex when choosing pictures from picture books,
3. Both color and monochromatic picture books should be included in a picture book cllection as both had almost equal appeal to the children in this study,
4. Teachers and school librarians should not anticipate any strong patterns of likes and dislikes of pictures within a group as no one picture received over ten votes in this study, and
5. The content of the picture may have more influence on children's preferences than the form (color) of the

illustration, as more content reasons were given by the children in suppcrt of their picture preferences.

Further Research Studies

Past studies have concentrated on children's preferences concerning types of illustrations rather than themes found in pictures. The data in this study are descriptive and provide information cn grade one children's picture preferences, and their reasons for these preferences. Pictures of children engaged in four different themes, with an equal number of colored and monochromatic illustrations, were used to elict responses from the grade one children. Since few studies have examined theme, and since the findings of this study are based on a small non-random sample, further research on the relation between theme and preferences is needed. Many variables could affect children's picture preferences. This study looked at the sex of the child, theme, and function and form of pictures. Other variables which could be examined include age, different themes and forms, group effects, and stability of children's preferences over time.

The sample used in the study was small and the pictures selected did not include all possible themes and forms generally found in picture books. This study, however, represents an initial attempt to gather data which may lead to better understanding of the reasons why children prefer certain kinds of themes. A body of descriptive information

is needed in order to provide insights for those who select picture books for young children.

What factors may be related to children's picture preferences and their reasons for these preferences? Will patterns emerge in picture preferences and reasons according to content/theme, form/style of illustration, the function of pictures, the child's own personal characteristics or the combination of all of these? This study suggests that perhaps it is the latter.

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APPENDIX A

Theme: Child with Toys

Picture number 1.

Caudill, R. The best loved doll. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1962, pp. 3-4.

This is a two page (33 by 22 centimeters) monochromatic picture. It shows a little girl running into her bedroom. There are three different types of dolls on a shelf.

Picture number 2.

Keats, E. J. Louie. New York: Green Willow Books, 1975, pp. 7-8.

This is a two page (44 by 20 centimeters) colored illustration. A little boy is viewing a puppet show. He sees two puppets, a little mouse and a doll puppet with a green face.

Theme: Children with Children

Picture number 3.

McCloskey, R. Time of wonder. New York: The Viking Press, 1957, pp. 22-23.

This is a page and a half (31 by 22 centimeters) colored picture. Eleven children who are playing at the beach are involved in such activities as diving into the water from rocks, playing by a boat, and playing with air filled toys.

Picture number 4.

Schlein, M. The girl who would rather climb trees. New York: Barcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975, pp. 25-26.

This is a two page (30 by 20 centimeters) monochromatic illustration. There are 12 children playing in a big tree. They are either climbing the branches, sitting in the tree house and drinking 'lemonade', or sitting on a branch and reading a book.

Theme: Child with Animals

Picture number 5.

Ets, M. H. Play with me. New York: The Viking Press, 1955, pp.28-29.

This is a two page (36 by 20 centimeters) colored picture of a little girl sitting in the forest with eight animals around her. The animals include a fawn (licking the little girl's face), a chipmunk, rabbit, turtle, frog, snake, grasshopper, and a blue jay.

Picture number 6.

Ward, L. The biggest bear. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1952, p. 73.

This is a one page (18 by 26 centimeters) monochromatic illustration. A little boy is hanging onto a rope which is tied to the neck of a large bear. This bear is running through the forest.

Theme: Child with Imagination

Picture number 7.

Balian, L. The aminal. New York: Abingdon Press, 1972, pp. 13-14.

This is a two page (37 by 25 centimeters) colored picture of a child's face looking up at a round green monster. This monster has ten legs, a long tail, two big eyes, an oval nose, and five white teeth. The green monster appears to be friendly.

Picture number 8.

Ward, L. The silver pony. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973, p. 47.

This is a one page (19 by 22 centimeters) monochromatic illustration of a boy riding a winged horse through the sky. They are flying over a barn.

APPENDIX B

6 3 5 4 8 2 1 7

#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6
Which picture would you choose to hear the story about?	Which picture would you choose if you could cut it out and put it on your bedroom wall?	Which picture would you choose to make up a story about?	Which picture would you choose to take home and read the story to your/ self?	Which picture do you like best of all?	Which picture do you not like like?
Why did you choose that picture? Any other reason?	Why did you choose that picture? Any other reason?	Why did you choose that picture? Any other reason?	Why did you choose that picture? Any other reason?	Why did you choose that picture? Any other reason?	Why did you choose that picture? Any other reason?

APPENDIX C

Description of the Six-Item Reasons Classification Chart

Listed below are the six categories that were used in classifying the children's reasons for their picture preferences. Included is a definiton of the category plus some examples of the children's reasons.

Content/Theme: What the picture contains and what the picture is about.

"Has Bambi in it, has a flying horse, has some children diving, has a goggly monster, has lots of kids in the tree its got a pretty girl, has a boy looking at puppets."

Form/Style: The shape or outline including color, density, and the manner in which the artist expresses himself.

The children only commented on the color or lack of color in the illustrations. "It's not colored, not colorful like the rest of them, so colorful, does not have any color, colorful pictures."

Adjectives of Description: Words describing the picture.

"It's funny, it's silly, it's scary, it's a good one, looks kind of nice, it is spooky."

Personal: An individual response pertaining to the child's own feelings about the picture.

"I like it, I like the picture, it reminds me of summer time, it reminds me of going to Grandpa's farm, I like

animals, I hate it."

Irrelevant: Comments not related to the picture the children were viewing.

"What he was, story says what baby says, has two words."

No Reason: When children indicated by saying: "don't know, no reason", by silence or by the shrug of their shoulders followed by silence.